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THE ROLE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, DISARMAMENT AND OTHER RELATED FIELDS

The role of science and technology in the context of the implementation of disarmament agreements

Working paper submitted by Portugal on behalf of the European Community and its member States

INTRODUCTION

1. An analysis of the role of science and technology in the context of international security including disarmament is a rather comprehensive and complex task: not only is the great variety of science and technology to be included, but also the entire spectrum of security issues, covering political, military and economic security as well as environmental security. Working papers as presented to the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1991 cover already some but by far not yet all of the issues involved. The European Community (EC) and its member States submitted a working paper containing a list of examples and suggestions for applications of disarmament-related science and technology (A/CN.10/155). This list, we believe, continues to serve as useful background information for further discussion. However, not all of the working papers presented in 1991 have been discussed in sufficient detail, and it is foreseeable that the Disarmament Commission will not have enough time to cover the ground completely. Thus, we are convinced that the only way to achieve concrete results is to select and to concentrate on a limited number of issues.

2. Any selection process is disputable; however, the mandate of the Disarmament Commission as described in the 1978 Final Document of the Tenth

Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, 1/ is given as "to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament". In line with that mandate, the Disarmament Commission should focus its attention on the role of science and technology in the context of disarmament.

3. Following the end of East-West confrontation, a great number of unilateral, bilateral or multilateral steps in the field of disarmament are under consideration, are being negotiated or are already in the process of implementation, not only between former East-West opponents but also in other regions of the world or in the global context. Disarmament is not, however, only a consequence of changes in the international political environment but also contributes to strengthening positive and cooperative tendencies in international politics.

4. Under these political circumstances, science and technology in the context of disarmament has received a clear mission: to encourage and to facilitate the implementation of disarmament measures resulting from unilateral decisions or bilateral or multilateral agreements.

5. We therefore propose that the Disarmament Commission concentrate on the role of science and technology in the context of the implementation of disarmament agreements. The aim of these endeavours should be to explore possible areas for cooperation and fields of activities for the United Nations. We hope for a concrete outcome which can be forwarded to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DISARMAMENT AGREEMENTS

6. The implementation of disarmament agreements can comprise the following areas in which science and technology could play a major role:

- Destruction or disabling of surplus military material;
- Conversion of surplus military material for civilian use;
- Destruction of certain military production facilities;
- Transformation of certain military production facilities from military production into the production of civilian goods;
- Verification.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DISARMAMENT

Destruction/disablement

7. Technologies for destruction or disabling of surplus military material should meet three requirements:

- The military material should be destroyed or disabled in such a way which would not allow it to be used in contravention of disarmament decisions and agreements;

- The destruction/disablement process should not have harmful effects on the natural environment;

- The destruction/disablement process needs to be carried out in the most economic manner possible and could include the option of recycling material for civilian purposes.

8. The technologies which would satisfy the requirements above might be available in many countries for the mechanical destruction of conventional military equipment such as armoured personnel carriers, tanks or artillery. Destruction, however, becomes more difficult whenever toxic, large quantities of high explosives or otherwise dangerous substances are involved.

9. The destruction of weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear warheads or chemical weapons or the destruction of weapons systems containing nuclear reactors requires specific knowledge and scientific and technological capabilities available only to very few countries. As the destruction of these weapons is of particular concern to the international community, in terms of its timeliness and its ecologically responsible implementation, the availability of adequate technologies to the country concerned is of particular international interest. In this respect, the technical experience acquired by the United Nations Special Commission established under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) could be useful to the international community in the implementation and verification of disarmament agreements.

Examples of international cooperation

10. Large quantities of nuclear weapons are to be destroyed in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as a result of the implementation of bilateral agreements between the United States of America and the former Soviet Union and unilateral declarations (by Presidents Bush, Gorbachev, Yeltsin) aimed at sweeping reductions of strategic arsenals and at the elimination of all land-based tactical nuclear weapons. The destruction of these weapons poses technical and logistic problems in the areas of transportation, storage and safety. Also, the conversion of weapon-grade nuclear material for civil purposes with a view to preventing its proliferation is another area of concern. In both instances international assistance and an exchange of scientific and technical know-how is called for.

11. Following the bilateral agreement between the United States of America and the former Soviet Union, and as part of the obligations under the future Chemical Weapons Convention, the timely destruction of chemical weapons requires international cooperation. Several countries have already offered technical assistance to the Russian Federation for the destruction of former Soviet chemical weapons.

The conversion of surplus military material

12. Conversion of surplus military material refers to a change in the use, from a military use to a civil one. While a number of experiments, proposals and actions are already known, the traditional image of beating swords into ploughshares does not take into account all the difficulties involved. Conversion must be:

- technologically feasible,
- justified by civil demand,
- cost-effective in terms of the conversion itself as well as in regard to the performance of the converted military material in the civil sector.

With a view to the last requirement, considerable research is still necessary. The large amount of military material to be disposed of within the coming years demands that economical methods should be accessible to all countries concerned as soon as possible.

The destruction and transformation of selected military production facilities

13. The destruction of selected military production facilities as the result of a disarmament agreement should only be an ultima ratio. Some market economies already have practical experience in conversion of military to civil industry as a result of a change in demand. The situation differs when the defence industry to be transformed is of great economic importance or enjoys particular privileges in the country concerned. In these cases, the transformation of selected military production facilities raises social, economic and technological problems which by their nature are outside the scope of the Disarmament Commission.

14. The research and production of military armaments tend to involve a large proportion of advanced technologies and production techniques as well as highly qualified scientists. The availability of those scientists in the civilian market as a result of transformation could have beneficial effects for the civil economy in the particular country. However, unemployed, highly specialized scientists for the production of weapons of mass destruction might be lured by well-paid jobs in other countries with ambitions in the development of their own weaponry. Thus, worldwide efforts to limit the proliferation of these weapons would be hampered. For this reason, the Russian Federation, supported by the European Community, the United States and

Japan undertook to establish an International Science and Technology Centre near Moscow which shall give former Soviet weapon scientists and engineers incentives to redirect their expertise to non-military endeavours and thus contribute to minimizing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as of missile delivery systems and other advanced military technologies; it shall also directly contribute through appropriate science and technology projects to the reduction and elimination of weapons of mass destruction. This initiative is a good example for international cooperation in the context of the implementation of disarmament decision and agreements.

The verification of disarmament agreements

15. Effective verification of compliance is the most important contribution to building confidence. Considerable work has been done on the issue of verification of disarmament agreements, within and outside the United Nations. Among them, the Disarmament Commission agreed on 16 principles of verification (adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/81 B of 7 December 1981) and more recently, a comprehensive study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification was completed. Thus, the purpose and value of verification need not be repeated in detail.

16. Parties to disarmament agreements should receive assurances that obligations will be fulfilled completely. In order to create equal verification opportunities, one possible solution is to agree upon the lowest level of verification technology available to all parties. However, there is no doubt that improved verification methods can increase detection of non-compliance and thus aid confidence-building.

17. Verification methods differ according to the purpose and scope of the disarmament agreement and the area of application. National technical means and cooperative measures complement each other. To ensure adequate and effective verification, States must have access to and be in a position to afford the necessary means of verification. As many States do not have the funds and expertise to perform the full range of possible verification tasks, cooperation is necessary not only to ensure equal opportunities for participation in verification but also for technical reasons.

18. International cooperation on the development and improvement of verification technology will have to deal with a number of basic problems:

- Technical difficulties to evaluate and analyse large amounts of information collected through modern information and communication instruments;

- The need for political targets and orientation data in order to focus research and development more effectively;

- The reluctance of political decision-makers to establish political targets without knowing what will be technically feasible. International cooperation should therefore try to identify possibilities for solving these problems.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN DISARMAMENT-RELATED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

19. Disarmament agreements need to be implemented fully. Technical problems to be solved vary widely. Technologies required range from low-technology destruction techniques, such as those for destroying tanks, and the high-technology destruction or transformation of nuclear warheads and chemical weapons to the high-technology verification activities associated with the establishment of data banks.

20. Possible bilateral, regional and global security benefits to be gained from disarmament agreements depend to some extent on the availability of science and technology. Security benefits could apply both to parties to an agreement and neighbouring States. Thus, the implementation of no disarmament agreement should be hampered because of the lack of the required technology. It is in this context that the Twelve consider international cooperation in disarmament-related science and technology to be indispensable.

21. With respect to increasing risks of proliferation of high technology with military applications and at the same time to legitimate interest of the international community in the transfer of high technology for civil purposes, it is our wish that discussion and cooperation continues along the lines set out in paragraph 16 of the report of last year's Working Group IV. 2/ We hope that the debate will continue following the request of the General Assembly to the Conference on Disarmament made in its resolution 46/36 L of 9 December 1991, paragraph 13, to address the problems related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction and elaboration of practical means to increase openness and the transparency in this field.

22. Responsibility for cooperation in disarmament-related science and technology lies with sovereign States. Cooperation could comprise acquisition, exchange, sharing, participation in and transfer of science and technology. All these activities are already part of normal international economic and military relations. Numerous examples for such cooperation exist. However, we believe that in view of the overall importance of disarmament-related technologies, additional efforts should be undertaken by the international community in order to make these technologies accessible to all interested States.

23. In this context, the European Community and its member States propose the following potential areas for discussion so as to assist in developing recommendations to be made by the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session:

(a) The reporting to the United Nations of applied disarmament-related technologies by parties to existing disarmament agreements in order to prepare an inventory accessible to all States;

(b) The inclusion in the above-mentioned reports of the modalities for a possible transfer of applied disarmament-related technologies;

(c) The need to offer to all interested States useful points of contact to assist in the familiarization with applied disarmament-related technologies;

(d) The value of organizing international conferences, seminars and other meetings of a scientific and technological character with the aim of identifying and analysing specific aspects of disarmament-related technologies;

(e) The encouragement of joint preparation and implementation of disarmament-related technology programmes.

Notes

1/ General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 118 (a).

2/ A/CN.10/1991/CRP.6.

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PROCESS OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Letter dated 24 April 1992 from the Head of the Chinese delegation addressed to the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission

I have the honour to transmit to you a document entitled "Working Paper: China's Basic Position on the Process of Nuclear Disarmament in the Framework of International Peace and Security, with the Objective of the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons". The Chinese text and its English translation are enclosed herewith.

I would be grateful if you would kindly arrange to have this text circulated as a document of the Disarmament Commission of this session.

(Signed) HOU Zhitong
Head of the Chinese delegation
to the 1992 session of the
United Nations Disarmament Commission

Annex

China's Basic Position on the Process of Nuclear Disarmament in the Framework of International Peace and Security, with the Objective of the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Working paper submitted by China

I. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROCESS AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

1. In recent years, the international situation has undergone tremendous changes and is now at a major turning point. The old world structure has crumbled, and the new one is yet to take shape. The old balance in the world has been deflected and a new round of division and realignment has started. The disintegration of the Soviet Union marks a turning point in the transitional period towards a multi-polar world structure. The tense confrontation between the two main military blocs has come to an end, and some regional problems have been or are being settled. However, the existing factors of tension have not been totally eliminated and more new factors of instability have cropped up. The world is by no means tranquil. Peace and development, the two major issues with which the world has been confronted for many years, have remained unsolved. The international community is more anxious to see the establishment of a new international political and economic order.

2. Arms control and disarmament, including nuclear arms control and disarmament, are important means to achieve international peace and security. The realization of effective nuclear disarmament will contribute to the relaxation of international tension and the alleviation of contradictions and confrontations, thus promoting international peace and security.

II. REVIEW OF STEPS TAKEN IN THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROCESS

In recent years, the long-standing stagnation in the field of international nuclear disarmament has been somewhat improved and some initial results have been achieved in the endeavour for nuclear disarmament. The United States and the former Soviet Union made some headway in their bilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. After lengthy negotiations, they finally concluded a treaty on the total destruction of all their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles and an agreement on the reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons. The two sides also declared, respectively, their plans for partial reduction of their tactical nuclear weapons and nuclear confidence-building measures. The United States and the Russian Federation have put forward successively proposals on further reduction of strategic nuclear weapons. All of these are welcome developments.

However, such progress is preliminary and limited, and they still have a long way to go in the process of nuclear disarmament. The above-mentioned

agreement on reduction of strategic nuclear weapons is yet to be ratified and implemented, and other plans and proposals negotiated and materialized. It is the hope of the international community that relevant countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States will continue to cooperate effectively with each other in order to ensure the safety of nuclear weapons and prevent nuclear proliferation. It is obvious that even after the countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals have cut their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their agreements and announcements, they will still possess the largest number of nuclear weapons in the world, which continue to be a serious threat to international security and are still more than enough to destroy the whole of mankind several times over. Their arms talks have so far focused mainly on the question of quantity, and the qualitative improvement of their nuclear armaments has not come to a halt. Meanwhile, they are still developing space weaponry by applying the most sophisticated scientific and technological achievements, and considering building jointly a so-called global defence system against nuclear weapons. This will inevitably extend the current arms race to outer space, thereby adding a new threat to world peace. Therefore, they still have a special responsibility in nuclear disarmament.

III. MEASURES FOR THE ACCELERATION OF THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROCESS

1. The acceleration of the nuclear disarmament process should make complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons its final objective. In order to realize this lofty target, countries with the largest nuclear arsenals should assume their special responsibility to take the lead in halting the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and drastically cut all types of nuclear weapons deployed at home and abroad, thus creating conditions for convening a broadly representative international conference on nuclear disarmament with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States.

2. All the nuclear weapons cut by the above-mentioned countries should be destroyed and the nuclear warheads duly disposed of so as to guarantee that they will not be used again for military purposes. Such reduction and destruction should not be confined merely to the nuclear weapons on their territories and in Europe, but should also include those deployed by them in the Asia-Pacific region so as to facilitate peace and security in all regions of the world.

3. Since a nuclear-test ban and nuclear disarmament are closely linked, the objective of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban should be reached within the context of an effective nuclear disarmament process. Countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals have conducted the most nuclear tests, numbering about 1,600 to date. Therefore, they have the obligation to take the lead in halting all nuclear tests and carrying out drastic nuclear disarmament so as to create conditions for a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Other countries concerned may, in line with their own national conditions, give positive consideration to participating in the international seismological

data exchange experiment so as to accumulate experience for the future establishment of an international verification system for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban.

4. Pending the realization of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, as an effective measure for the prevention of nuclear war, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake the following commitments:

(a) Not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances, and conclude an international agreement on not being the first to use nuclear weapons;

(b) Not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones, and conclude an international legal instrument in this regard;

(c) To support the proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, respect their status and undertake the corresponding obligations.

5. Countries that have deployed nuclear weapons abroad should pull back all these weapons to their own territories.

6. Major space powers should halt the arms race in outer space and the development of space weapons, especially nuclear-related space weapons.

7. The prevention of nuclear proliferation is a measure in the process towards complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. The prevention of nuclear proliferation will contribute to the maintenance of world peace and security. The prevention of nuclear proliferation is linked with nuclear disarmament, and they are complementary to each other. Major progress in the field of nuclear disarmament can genuinely strengthen the authority of a nuclear non-proliferation regime, while the maintenance of an effective nuclear non-proliferation regime can create favourable conditions for complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Prevention of nuclear proliferation and acceleration of the nuclear disarmament process should not be a hindrance to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The adoption of appropriate measures by the parties concerned in the cooperation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, including nuclear explosive devices, constitutes a prerequisite for any successful cooperation in this respect.

8. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones based on agreements reached on a voluntary basis and through negotiations by the countries concerned in different regions of the world in line with the actual conditions of their respective regions is conducive to nuclear disarmament and the security and stability of all regions.

9. In parallel to nuclear disarmament, drastic reductions should be made in conventional armamaments. Nuclear and conventional disarmaments are closely

linked and complimentary to each other. Regions with a high concentration of conventional armaments and countries with the largest conventional armaments and countries with the largest conventional arsenals should take the lead in adopting concrete measures to cut their conventional armaments. The armed forces thus reduced should be disbanded and weapons and equipment destroyed or turned to civilian uses. They should be neither transferred to or redeployed in other regions, nor sold to other countries.

10. Countries with the largest arsenals should, at the same time, drastically cut their naval and especially their naval nuclear armaments and long-range naval forces.

IV. ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR THE ACCELERATION OF THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROCESS

The disarmament process, including nuclear disarmament, will inevitably be restrained and affected by the international environment. The creation of a peaceful and stable international environment is conducive to the implementation of effective nuclear disarmament. Therefore:

1. All countries should respect each other's sovereignty, treat each other as equals, try to seek common ground while putting aside differences, live in harmony and carry out friendly cooperation.

2. No country should seek hegemony or try to manipulate international affairs, or pursue power politics.

3. All States, large or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, should participate in the settlement of international affairs as equal members of the international community.

4. Every State has the right to choose independently its own social, political and economic systems and its own path of development in the light of its own national conditions. No country should interfere in the internal affairs of other countries under any pretext or impose its own ideology, values or mode of development on other countries.

5. All countries should observe the principle of mutual respect for territorial integrity and inviolability of national borders, and no country should be allowed to invade or annex the territories of other countries under whatever pretexts.

6. Disputes between States should be settled in a reasonable manner by peaceful means, and the use or threat of force is impermissible in international relations.

V. ROLE OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT MECHANISMS AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Full use must be made of the existing bilateral, regional and multilateral mechanisms, including mechanisms within the United Nations system. At the same time, these mechanisms could be improved and necessary new mechanisms established in line with the changing situation and requirements of the nuclear disarmament process. In this regard, consideration could be given to the relevant recommendations in the report entitled "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament" adopted by consensus at the 1990 session of the Disarmament Commission. 1/

Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/45/42), pp. 15-19.

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PROCESS OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

REGIONAL APPROACH TO DISARMAMENT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL SECURITY

Letter dated 16 April 1992 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary of the Disarmament Commission

I have the honour to refer to the report of the Commission on Disarmament's provisional agenda for the 1992 substantive session which has been circulated as document A/CN.10/L.30 dated 30 January 1992. With specific reference to items No. 5 and 6 of the agenda I wish to bring to your attention a number of developments in South Africa both in regard to nuclear weapons and in regard to disarmament in general.

The South African Government deposited its Instrument of Accession to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (N.P.T.) on 10 July 1991 in Washington D.C. The relative domestic legislation was reviewed and new regulations promulgated in terms of the Armaments and Development Act (No. 57 of 1968) on 30 August 1991 through a notice published in the South African Government Gazette.

The text of Government Gazette Notice No. R 2122 of 30 August 1991 clearly underlines South Africa's commitment to its obligations. The full text reads as follows:

SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE

No. R 2122 30 August 1991

ARMAMENTS DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, IMPORT, TRANSIT, EXPORT AND MARKETING CONTROL

I, Magnus Andre de Merindol Malan, in my capacity of Minister of Defence, acting by virtue of the powers vested in me by section 4C of the Armaments Development and Production Act, 1968, (Act No. 57 of 1968), do hereby proscribe the following in regard to the prohibition on the development, manufacturing, import, transit, export and marketing of armaments:

With effect from the date of the publication of this notice no nuclear explosive devices or spare parts which can be used for nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices as purported in Article II of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons shall be developed or manufactured in the Republic or transported through the Republic from any place outside the Republic to any such other place or exported from the Republic or marketed inside or outside the Republic, and no attempt shall be made to develop or manufacture such goods inside the Republic or to transport such goods through the Republic or to export such goods or to market such goods inside or outside the Republic.

Further to the above step, the South African Government signed a Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency on 16 September 1991. The Agreement entered into force the same day. Under the Safeguards Agreement South Africa was required to submit an initial report to the IAEA listing all the nuclear material in nuclear activities within the country, and did so, as confirmed by the IAEA in its press report No. 1196 of 8 November 1991.

I had the honour to advise the Secretary-General of my Government's accession in a letter dated 11 July 1991 (subsequently distributed as General Assembly document A/46/302 of 15 July 1991 under item 58 of the preliminary list); and of the subsequent developments in a letter dated 11 November 1991 (subsequently distributed as General Assembly document A/C.1/46/18 of 12 November 1991 under agenda item 58).

The initial report submitted by South Africa was reviewed by the Agency, and was followed by an IAEA visit to South Africa to verify it in accordance with its normal practice. IAEA negotiation teams have visited South Africa in regard to conventional nuclear facilities and also in regard to South Africa's enrichment facilities, and negotiations conducted to put in place the detailed subsidiary arrangements required by the Safeguards Agreement. In addition to this the Agency has familiarized the South African authorities and functionaries with full-scope safeguards implementation through an orientation seminar.

The IAEA is currently examining data provided by South Africa and will in due course produce a report. On receipt of the report South Africa will take further steps if necessary to comply with IAEA requirements under the Safeguards Agreement, in line with its commitments.

The South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. R. F. Botha, has repeatedly over the past few years expressed South Africa's support for the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in Africa. South Africa has been encouraged by the accession to the N.P.T. of other African countries, especially the recent accession of several in southern Africa, which opens the door to such a goal, if not immediately for the whole of Africa, at least initially in the southern African region. South Africa's accession to the N.P.T., signing of the Safeguards Agreement and the subsequent steps taken should be interpreted as a positive disposition towards such a development.

Further to the above, South Africa has embarked on bilateral discussions with various of its neighbours. Earlier this month a delegation from Kenya visited the South African Atomic Energy Corporation (AEC) at its headquarters at Pelindaba for an exchange of views. Subjects discussed included the fields of nuclear medicine, technology and the use of atomic energy in agriculture.

South Africa believes that it has a role to play in the development of nuclear technology, particularly on the African continent and is interested in exchanging nuclear technologies with other countries, especially in Africa. To this end it hopes to become a member of AFRA, the African section of the IAEA.

I would appreciate it if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the Disarmament Commission.

(Signed) R. W. STEWARD
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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REGIONAL APPROACH TO DISARMAMENT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL SECURITY

Working paper submitted by Cuba

1. The programme of work which the Disarmament Commission approved at its 1991 session included the item: "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security". For the consideration of that item, the Commission decided to establish Working Group III, which was open to the participation of all interested States.

2. The substantive debate on this item and the proposals and papers submitted by various States clearly indicate that the item has generated considerable interest among delegations and therefore that its inclusion in the Commission's agenda was appropriate and also timely. In the course of the debate, specific aspects of the item were identified and discussed and potential areas of common interest were explored, and these were clearly described in the report that Working Group III submitted for consideration by the Disarmament Commission at the end of its 1991 session. 1/

3. At the current session of the Commission, a further substantive and detailed debate on the item is to be held with the aim of finding common ground in relation to the various aspects of the question which are described in the papers submitted by Member States which have been circulated by the Secretariat.

4. In order to facilitate their consideration, Cuba's ideas, proposals and observations regarding this item of the Commission's programme of work are described below in as clear and detailed a manner as possible.

5. With regard to the structure of the Chairman's paper, which appears in the report on the work of Working Group III (annex III to the Commission's

report), Cuba believes that it can serve as a basis for future discussions on this question. However, the title of topic I (ibid., para. 6) should be reviewed and should be made simpler and more concise. A variant which could serve as a basis for negotiations on this subject is the following: "Relationship between regional and global approaches to disarmament".

6. In addition to the questions already included in topic I, Cuba believes that the following ideas should be reflected:

(a) Any negotiating process for disarmament or arms limitation and reduction at the regional level must take into account the progress and difficulties of that process at the global level because of the close interrelationship between the two.

(b) The achievements at the regional level in the adoption of agreements on disarmament and arms limitation or reduction, along with those at the bilateral and global levels, should make it possible to progress towards the attainment of the fundamental objective in this sphere, namely, general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

7. With regard to the proposals included under topic II, Principles and guidelines, Cuba believes that the following points should be taken into account:

(a) In the first line of the fifth paragraph, the words "and the reduction and elimination of tension" should be added after "regional conflicts".

(b) The following sentence should be added at the end of the sixth paragraph: "i.e., those which make it possible for surprise attacks to be launched and large-scale offensive operations to be carried out within the territory of other States".

(c) The seventeenth paragraph should be replaced by the following: "Disarmament and arms limitation or reduction agreements which are adopted at the regional level must be respected by all extra-regional countries, in particular by nuclear powers and other militarily significant States. Such States must refrain from taking measures which directly or indirectly block the attainment of the objectives proposed in those agreements, or impede their implementation, particularly if they are outside the region". Further to the comments made above on the proposals already included in the Commission's report, Cuba believes that the following questions should be included in the final version of the document adopted by the Working Group:

I. Regional disarmament efforts should ultimately make it possible to attain the objective of general and complete disarmament through the adoption of a range of measures which may cover a limited geographical area and be partial in scope.

II. High priority must be given to the adoption of disarmament and arms limitation or reduction measures in the regions in which there are large concentrations of weapons, or conflicts and tension which may lead to military confrontation between one or more of the States in the region, or between those States and other States with interests in the area.

III. In any negotiating process for disarmament and arms limitation or reduction at the regional level, and also at the global level, priority must be given to those weapons which are clearly offensive or destabilizing in nature, or which can be used to launch large-scale offensive operations within the territory of the adversary, or rapid or surprise attacks, with the aim of total destruction.

IV. Agreements on disarmament and on arms limitation or reduction must be adopted on the basis of the formal commitment of all the States parties to fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed under those agreements.

V. In order to implement practical measures designed to increase regional security, it is necessary to identify the elements which are the main source of instability or tension and constitute a threat to the peace and security of the region.

VI. Agreements on disarmament and on arms limitation or reduction and the adoption of other regional or global measures must respect the right of each State to choose freely the political and security system that best reflects the interests and wishes of its population.

8. With regard to topic III, "Ways and means", Cuba believes that the following points should be taken into account:

Confidence- and security-building measures

(a) The second paragraph should consist of the first sentence only.

(b) The third paragraph should be redrafted, since it is not necessary to verify all the confidence-building measures that are adopted. An alternative could be the following: "During the negotiations on confidence-building measures, the need for and feasibility of verifying the implementation of some of these measures at the regional level should be fully analysed and assessed".

In addition to the proposals already included under this topic, Cuba considers that the following ideas should be added:

I. Confidence-building measures must be adopted in other spheres at the regional level, particularly in the economic sphere, in order to promote mutual trust, mutually beneficial relations among States and

interdependence between them and thereby strengthen security in the region.

II. The adoption of a defensive military doctrine and structuring of the armed forces in a predominantly defensive manner, and the implementation of the principle of reasonable sufficiency for defence (defence sufficiency) on the part of all States could be of great importance in promoting trust, security and the adoption of agreements on disarmament and arms limitation or reduction.

III. The declaration on the non-use of force or threat of its use on the part of States can help create an atmosphere of trust based on mutual respect which could contribute to the adoption of agreements on disarmament and arms limitation or reduction.

IV. The adoption of measures designed to eliminate or reduce to an absolute minimum the danger posed to the security of the smallest States by the militarization and enormous military arsenals of some States is one of the questions that must be taken up at the regional and global levels which would create a favourable atmosphere for the conclusion of agreements on disarmament and arms limitation or reduction.

Arms limitation and disarmament agreements

(a) The first paragraph should read as follows:

"Regional measures for disarmament and arms limitation or reduction which are initiated by States in the region, and in which they participate, may lead to the relaxation of tension in the region concerned and should have a positive bearing on other regions as well as on global efforts for peace, security and disarmament".

(b) The following should be added at the end of the third paragraph:

"These measures should not hamper the transfer of technologies associated with these spheres which have civilian applications, provided that guarantees are given that they are to be used exclusively for civilian purposes".

(c) In the first line of the fourth paragraph, the words "and global" should be added after "regional".

(d) In the second line of the sixth paragraph, the words "in the region" should be replaced by "not only at the regional but also at the global level".

Zones of peace and zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

(a) Mention should be made in the first paragraph to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

This comment also applies to the second and third paragraphs.

(b) The second paragraph should include the idea that States which are outside the zone, but have a presence or interests in it, must make a commitment to respect the agreements that are adopted by the States within that zone.

Non-proliferation regime

(a) The following paragraph should be added:

"In order to ensure that the non-proliferation regime becomes universal, it is essential that it should be non-discriminatory, i.e. that all States parties assume the same obligations and have the same rights.

Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/46/42), para. 41.